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NSC FOR AHARRIMAN
OSD FOR KIMMITT
CENTCOM FOR CG CFC-A. CG CJTF-76 POLAD

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [EAID](#) [MARR](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: KARZAI DESCRIBES "TERRIBLE" RELATIONS WITH
PAKISTAN IN MEETING WITH GOVDEL

Classified By: DCM Richard Norland for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: During a March 8 meeting with Governors Tim Pawlenty (R-MN), Janet Napolitano (R-AZ), and Brad Henry (D-OK), Lisa Marie Cheney, Lt. Gen. Steven Blum (Chief, National Guard Bureau), and Charge, President Karzai described Afghanistan's current relationship with Pakistan as "terrible," but admitted that there were some signs over the last three to four months that Pakistan was doing more to combat terrorism. That said, Karzai revealed that, he considers relations with Pakistan to be his greatest challenge, noting "We are a long way from being satisfied with Pakistan's intentions and cooperation." He asked for continued U.S. support in pressuring Pakistan to do more on cross-border security.
END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) Most of President Karzai's meeting with the GovDel focused on relations with Pakistan, which Karzai admitted "started with a clean slate" just after the fall of the Taliban in 2001. "Since then," he explained, "there has been so much suffering, so many killed." He said he considered relations with Pakistan and its link to security in Afghanistan as his foremost challenge. Karzai contrasted security and counter-terrorism with the other problems that Afghanistan faces, noting that "we will continue to have a weak economy, weak infrastructure, and corruption, but those are 'our' problems." "Help us with Pakistan," Karzai implored, "and we will be able to focus on these issues."

¶3. (C) Karzai asserted Pakistan must be convinced that a prosperous Afghanistan is in its interest and that Pakistan currently suffers from a paranoia that Afghanistan aims to reclaim some of the territory that belonged to it prior to creation of the Durand Line. On that point, Karzai emphasized, "We are realistic and have no intentions of doing that, but Pakistan has to be convinced." Karzai also noted that Pakistan has benefited tremendously from "the arrival of the rest of the world into Afghanistan," pointing out that during the Taliban regime, Pakistan's exports to Afghanistan were valued at \$25 million USD per year, compared to \$1.3 billion USD today.

¶4. (C) Karzai seemed particularly inspired by General Blum's comments that he was personally invested in the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan because his own son was currently fighting alongside ANSF in Nangarhar. Karzai enthusiastically responded, "I hope our Afghan generals will do the same," and instructed his staff to remind him to raise the point at an upcoming meeting with Afghan generals.

¶5. (C) Despite a gloomy description of current relations with Pakistan, Karzai's overall assessment of Afghanistan's development was positive since 2001. He pointed out that what was once a 48-hour drive from Kabul to Herat could now be covered in 9 hours due to construction of the Ring Road, and noted that good rains over the past few months will lead to strong crop yields and economic growth for farming communities this year. He also noted a recent UNODC report which announced significant decreases in poppy cultivation in at least 12 provinces. He pointed out that in 2002, per capita income in Afghanistan was only \$180 USD, compared to \$355 USD today, and expects it to rise to \$500 USD by the end of his term in 2009. "Life has blossomed for us," Karzai said as he ended the meeting, also noting that, "The journey will not be a short one. We're going to be here together for longer than we thought."

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